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The Passing of Mary Baker Eddy

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THE PASSING OF MARY BAKER EDDY

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BY

EDWARD C. FARNSWORTH

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THE PASSING OF MARY BAKER EDDY

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VOICING her sincere belief, Mrs. Eddy once declared that already the child was born who never would suffer physical death. This was in the early days of Christian Science when the faithful were few indeed. Long afterward her student hearer expressed to the present writer the profound and lasting impression his teacher's prophesy had made in him.

His opinion has ever been that Mrs. Eddy referred not to herself, but, in fact, to some disciple of a time, more enlightened and not far distant, when the truths of Christian Science, active in the hearts of the majority of mankind, would create conditions favorable to this full and final demonstration.

As for the teacher, she now has passed even as the king or the beggar in every age and country of the world. Length of days has been hers, a not

unusual compensation of Nature to women whose early and middle life has been marked by ill health, or chronic invalidism. She has passed as kind Nature would have us all pass, not painfully through the breaking of wheel, spring, or balance, but rather by the gradual wearing out and cessation of the whole machinery of the body.

Whether or not Mrs. Eddy in her foretelling referred to herself is debatable. Certainly very many advanced Scientists looked for the unusual to mark the earthly end of their revered leader. Questioners, not in the sacred circle of believers, have met the knowing look and evasive reply intended to arouse rather than satisfy curiosity, while Mrs. Eddy's own attitude of late years has, at least in appearance, been one of preparation.

Like the mystics of all lands and times who have left the arena for the cell, the city for the forest, or the mountain cave, she retires to a solitude penetrated only by the proven few,

those necessary to herself, and to her supervision of Christian Science work. Her followers rear in the metropolis a costly temple, but she goes not there to worship. There is the "mother's room" with its costly appointments, a room which she never occupies. The great body of believers may not approach too near her retreat, much less may they enter on any pretext. In her closed carriage she threads the city ways as one apart from the multitude. In short she, as far as may be, bars herself from the shafts of those twin devils of her creed, malicious animal magnetism and ignorant animal magnetism.

Could it have been arranged, she would have become as inaccessible as the Dalai-Lama, who in the Himalayas protected himself from the inharmonious vibrations of unbelief. An almost mythical being was he until English arms, penetrating the mountain fastness of Tibet, arrived at the holy and forbidden city of Lhasa.

Behind her four walls Mrs. Eddy was held either dead or imbecile by thousands in the realms of untruth, and so to them she was unless they accepted the life, the truth, she offered in her various written revelations. Foolish ones and blind, they did not comprehend that in the chosen calm of her Concord or Newton home she, as far as possible, would overcome those gigantic and most formidable of earthly errors, physical body, and physical death.

The faithful held that in her success, Christian Science would be wholly vindicated; but should she fail, and that was a possibility, then it were wiser and better that nothing be said but that the age is as yet too densely ignorant for Truth to come into shining. However, Christian Scientists are not all of them wise, or even tactful; some one will talk when silence would be golden.

Now, at the time to be non-committal, a certain Mrs. Stetson has her

hopes and beliefs, and the courage, if not the prudence, to speak with no uncertain voice. So, because a once prominent and influential, but now deposed member of the Mother Church of Boston, she is pounced upon; she must endure the bark and bite of the vigilant watchdog of the sheepfold.

Let us see what authority "in Science" Mrs. Stetson has for saying that Mother Eddy, in her true body, will yet appear for the edification of the disciples, and the teaching of the multitude.

Science and Health avers that man, the everlasting child and thought of God, is above and outside of material body. Material man came into this material world not by the will of God, nor yet by his permission, for in fact God knows nothing of one who is actually non-existent, a mere appearance due to mortal mind which, at his conception, cunningly counterfeited the real man, the eternal thought of eternal Mind.

Jesus himself was a counterfeit, unique and marvelous, but still a counterfeit. In the mortal mind of Mary arose a semblance of the Christ Principle, "Life, Truth and Love forever in the bosom of the Father." By a supreme effort of mortal mind, Mary became pregnant and, in due course, brought forth a child the like of which shall never again appear, for, in the resurrection of the Master, the Christ Principle dissipated forever those erroneous things, the body and mind of Jesus.

While Jesus is *sui generis*, there have been other prophets of the Truth, but no prophet of the whole Truth appeared until the advent of Mrs. Eddy. She is the highest and most wonderful counterfeit of the heavenly child of God that this world has known. and therefore she is second only to the lowly Nazarene. In an age of iron, Moses taught the stern justice of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. To his prepared disciples, and follow-

ers to be, Jesus taught God's loving fatherhood to Jew and Gentile alike. In a more receptive age, our own, Mrs. Eddy taught that crowning truth, the sweet motherhood of Deity; the Father-Mother God, the eternal and only Mind; in other words, she taught Divine Science.

The Christian Scriptures narrate the triumph of Jesus over death and the grave, and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* foretells the ultimate triumph of the truth-enlightened over death, the last great illusion. Mrs. Stetson holds that Mrs. Eddy, as the supreme benefactor of the race, and the way-shower to our age, and all future ages, has spiritualized herself enough to be able now, or in the near future, to demonstrate to the eye of this world the unreality of death, and the reality of spiritual body and being. This is the head and front of her offending.

That Mrs. Stetson considers Mrs. Eddy a "second Christ" is unbeliev-

able since the merest tyro in Christian Science knows the sharp distinction drawn in *Science and Health* between Jesus and the Christ. Neither could she consider her teacher a second Jesus for reasons already given. Every thorough student of Science knows the real status of Mrs. Eddy; she is the great Mother, the new and better Mary; better because she revealed to the world the incorporeal Christ Principle, whereas Mary of old gave but Jesus whose life was a striving toward the Reality, the Christ, that he attained only through sorrow, suffering and mortal death, all of them unrealities which he in his mortal flesh could not wholly overcome because of the unbelief of the world at large, and the lack of perfect faith among his nearest disciples.

The same age-old lack of perfect faith Mrs. Stetson finds in the near disciples of one of whom she holds that being dead to falsity she yet lives.

Mrs. Stetson reproaches those in power whom she believes capable of removing from the church manual the name "Pastor emeritus," those who would thus affirm belief in the real passing of one whom they should know to be of all women the most alive and active in ever-present Truth. Mrs. Stetson announces the end of the gospel age, and the entrance of humanity upon the millennial age.

In our western world it is but little known that the astrologers of the ancient East, understanding the procession of the equinoxes, in other words, understanding the twenty-five thousand year cycle during which the sun passes through the twelve houses of the Zodiac, held that the sun's advent in any house meant the connecting of the great lines by which cosmic energy, or Cosmic Will, was conveyed to this world, a process which, in these days of wireless telegraphy, we can better understand than could our predecessors of a generation ago.

Furthermore, the experts in the ancient arcane science held that the coming of the sun into any zodiacal house was necessarily marked by a grand spiritual awakening; the unusual descent of spiritual force making for conditions necessary to the birth of a great spiritual leader of the race. Two thousand years ago the sun entered the house of Pisces, whose sign is that of the fishes, the secret sign of early Christianity, one beyond all doubt known to the Magi who journeyed to the cradle of Jesus. In 1897, or thereabouts, the sun entered the house of Aquarius, whose sign is that of the water-bearer which, in the ancient arcane science, signified a more plenteous outpouring of Truth.

Be all this as it may, one cannot ignore the tendencies of the times. Never, since the first century of our era, have men been looking, as now they look, for the second coming of Jesus the Christ. The Second Advent, and the Millennial Dawn societies,

together with many among the Theosophists, who base their beliefs on sources well outside of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, would fix a date in the near future, while multitudes in our evangelical churches hold that the days of Daniel are well-nigh fulfilled.

Never, ere this, was there a time when so many false prophets, so many spurious Elijahs, warning the faithful to flee from the wrath to come, waxed great and rich on the substance of their dupes. We laugh or grieve at these deluded ones caught up and tossed upon the great wave of psychism, the wave of hypnotic suggestion, now sweeping upon man's mental shores; but behind this sweeping is a greater wave, from the fathomless ocean of Truth, driving before it all lesser waves. These shall spill themselves, and their wreckage, upon the border sands, leaving to triumphant and overflowing Truth her rightful possession.

In prophesying publicly the reappearance of Mrs. Eddy, Mrs. Stetson

antagonizes the powers that be; not however, that they deem the founder of their faith unworthy such unique distinction, but rather because, lacking the fearless optimism of Mrs. Stetson, they will not publicly countenance a prediction which, if proved unfounded, would draw upon themselves and their church the ridicule of the sceptic and the scoffer.

Among Scientists no question of Mrs. Eddy's unworth is ever tolerated, and yet she contrasts strangely with him who had not where to lay his head. Born into a materialistic age, with what both she and hers deem a divinely inspired message against materialism upon her tongue and pen, she escapes not a certain taint of the time. Of all persons, in or out of the fold, she is one of the last to ignore the material dollar. Such a weight of material gold as was legally hers, should somewhat burden the wings of one who would soar free from the delusions and pitfalls of this treacherous and sordid world, and

then would return, as a wholly immaterial being, to convince every doubting Thomas, and confound the unbelieving in all lands.

Perhaps Mrs. Stetson has, in her make up, an excess of faith and hope; but what are faith and hope? To our way of thinking these are indispensable soul substances; charity is another indispensable. Evidently Mrs. Stetson deems the board of directors of the Mother Church deficient in these three. During every age of the world men have questioned the unseen in wonder that it hides from mortal vision. "Show us and we will believe," they say, not realizing that, to develop the soul, both faith and hope must be exercised. The musician, the artist, or the actor, will say of his pupil, "Better an excess of temperament than no temperament; the one may be modified, the other is well-nigh hopeless." God pity the poor and shrivelled soul devoid of faith and hope! Yes, God pity it! Omnipotence cannot

make of that soul what some other shall become.

In his open letter against Mrs. Stetson and her resurrection theory, Alfred Farlow says, "The statement that the Christian Science board of directors has received a protest from New York against the placing of guards at Mrs. Eddy's tomb is absolutely false." "There was no mysticism, or supernaturalism in the minds of those who placed the guards at the entrance of Mrs. Eddy's tomb. It was done for the usual reasons."

Certainly no one with the faith and hope of Mrs. Stetson would object to the placing of guards who would prove invaluable witnesses should the so-called supernatural occur as on a memorable Easter morning nineteen centuries ago. Mr. Farlow avers that the guards were there for the usual reasons; but had the unusual, the marvelous, occurred, would it have been in human nature to admit their placing for an ordinary purpose? We doubt

it; and we doubt that Christian Scientists would have admitted it, for the fact is patent that, in comparison with the members of other Christian denominations, they retain in their make up quite as much of the old Adam, and the old Eve, and this notwithstanding that "chemicalization" is supposedly active in their mortal minds and bodies.

Mrs. Stetson much fears that by tampering with the manual, the authorities of the Mother Church will obscure the pure Truth as revealed by Mrs. Eddy. It may be so; but Mrs. Stetson ought to know that the real danger is to be found in the writings of the Mother herself. What is the cornerstone of Christian Science if not the allness of Mind and the nothingness of matter, as affirmed in the "Scientific statement of Being?" Between these two opposites *Science and Health* admits of no compromise. Mind and matter, Good and evil, All and nothing! In battle array they stand, the conqueror and the thing to be conquered, and no over-

tures of peace are allowable, or even possible.

In his Stetson article, Mr. Farlow, whose duty and desire is to quote correctly from his oracle, prints these words of Mrs. Eddy: "It is the teaching of Christian Science that in our present immature condition we have more or less of a misconception of creation, which will improve and eventually disappear as we advance spiritually, and that eventually we will be able to see all things as God sees them in all their spirituality and perfection."

Reading the above, one can imagine matter advancing from its position of nothingness and drawing near, and eventually meeting Mind in a mutual hand-clasp. If Christian Scientists were something more; if metaphysicians as well, then would they see that the doctrines above quoted are those of ordinary Idealism, accepted by thousands since the days of Plato; in fact, the mighty Grecian taught these very things, but his was a mind too logical

to see in the densest matter a mere nothing.

To Mrs. Eddy a lump of clay is nothing, while a rose is "the smile of God;" but surely the rose was rooted and nourished in the soil, and, having lived its life, perhaps on the bosom of Mrs. Eddy herself, it is cast out to mingle with the dust. The clay is nothing, the rose is something, says Mrs. Eddy. Plato would have argued that nothing will always be nothing, that the clay is a lesser something than is the rose, for otherwise the clay could not have contributed to its delicate, lovely and fragrant tissues. Now, if we agree with Platonic Idealism that the clay is something, in fact the Truth seen through the veil of illusion, we disagree with the fundamental concept of Christian Science for we have asserted that Mind is not all.

Although in the construction of Mrs. Eddy's peculiar philosophy it was necessary that matter should be nothing, an absolute zero, still, when she looked

upon the appealing beauties of the material world, her better sense belied her theories, and the result was an ingenious attempt to overcome the palpable contradiction.

In this attempt the clay may be likened to a darkened room, the rose to that room when somewhat of sunlight has entered. The clay is dead appearance, nothing, until the sunlight of Truth entering displaces it, and the result is an approach to final Truth, in other words it is Truth manifest as a rose.

Although this explanation satisfies the Christian Scientist, it yet presents to the critical investigator certain insurmountable difficulties. How came the room to be dark? If not dark, whence and why the appearance of darkness? If there be no truth in clay, how then can misconception in regard to clay exist in a universe possessed and filled by omnipotent, omnipresent Truth?

The logical reasoner will at once perceive the difficulty, and supply the

necessary reality and power of opposing ignorance. These questions are in fact old ones in philosophy, questions which logic and reason have never otherwise been able to answer. However, Christian Scientists are as undisturbed by those mortal things reason and logic as is Mrs. Eddy who, to vindicate Truth, must prove to nonexisting mortal mind that Truth alone exists. History shows that the progress of enlightening Truth has been painfully slow, like that of a sword driven through solid oak; but if matter were nothing, Truth should flash upon the world swifter than sunlight piercing the inter-planetary ether; swifter than electricity belting the globe; swifter than the thought of man winging to the outmost star.

Again, Mrs. Eddy's definition of matter, "nothing claiming to be something," is the most absurd and self-contradictory to be found in any pseudo philosophy. Still this Eddy aphorism is a sweet morsel of wisdom on the

tongue of the Scientist who, in no instance, asks himself by what miracle "nothing" is enabled to make its claim.

According to Mrs. Stetson, Jesus accomplished a stupendous task in reversing the testimony of mortal mind, and Mrs. Eddy wrestled mightily to overcome and rise superior to false belief of mind in matter. But Mrs. Stetson knows Mrs. Eddy's failure, at least for the time being, for, despite her wrestling, she succumbed to the error of sickness and bodily death. From this it appears that the nothing of mortal mind, like that of matter, somehow refuses to down.

Returning to our simile of the clay and the rose; Mrs. Eddy calls the one nothing because to her mean, and unsightly; the other is something because it appeals to her æsthetic sense. Now who shall decide in the matter of beauty? With his microscope the man of science detects what he deems beautiful in the clay. The sculptor and the

painter, praising the lines and contours of the human body, argue that physical man is the consummation of God's handiwork on this material plane, and the anatomist and the physiologist agree with them, but Mrs. Eddy, in this instance true to her theories, will insist that physical body is nothing, absolute zero, and base her system of healing on that theory.

All this, and also the real source of Christian Science philosophy in the old Eleatic fallacy of Parmenides, has been discussed at length in the present writer's book, *The Sophistries of Christian Science*, to be found in most public libraries.

And now let us return to the matter which prompted these few pages, to wit, the passing of Mrs. Eddy, and the prophesy of her reappearance.

The Mosaic writings declare the body of physical man to be dust, and, in Christian Science, Adam, "error," was formed from the dust of the ground, and to dust, nothingness, shall he return.

In Mrs. Eddy's teaching, the body of the good man or woman is not all error, as will be understood from our simile of the clay and the rose, and that of the darkened and the lighted room. The real child or thought of God, of which mortal man is a counterfeit, dwells in a mind body glorious to the opened eye, hence the stories of angelic appearances found in every great religion. This true being of man shines into and dissipates the material elements of physical man in proportion to his openness to the heavenly influx. In the case of Jesus, this process continued through his ministry and crucifixion, and was fully accomplished in the tomb. In the case of Mrs. Eddy, it was a consummation devoutly wished by every Scientist well versed in the philosophy of his cult.

Mrs. Stetson is a time-honored and thorough student of Christian Science, a disciple once very near and dear to her leader, moreover, she is a woman whose native abilities place her well

toward the front of the two million or more adherents to her peculiar creed; and she, knowing the whole philosophy and trend of Christian Science, finds warrant for her publicly avowed belief that Mrs. Eddy will yet reappear for the benefit of humanity. We have undertaken to show the consistency of her position, but, at the same time, the interests of real Truth have constrained us to indicate and indite the chief fallacies on which she bases her utterances, fallacies which she holds in common with Mr. Farlow and every other member in good standing in the Mother Church.

If our logic has proved to the reader the false premise of Christian Science, and the consequent absurdity of any resurrection theory deduced from it, he will doubtless ask why Mrs. Eddy, a woman of decided native ability, has so deluded herself, and her intelligent following, with her theory of spirit and matter.

To this query our answer would be

that the history of Philosophy is the history of many such enigmas. The illogical premises of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and their successors among the Eleatics, were undiscovered by themselves, and unremedied by their cleverest disciples; it required a Plato to disprove them. Nor did the great Idealist succeed in constructing a wholly satisfactory scheme of God, Man, and Nature.

Now while, in the history of Philosophy, scheme has superseded scheme, she nevertheless approaches ultimate Truth by a system of exclusion. Truth is comparable to a diamond priceless indeed, but hidden in some one of many rooms. Seeking in certain of these, Philosophy, time and again, has come upon a stone pure at first sight, but defective under test. Now she knows where the treasure is not, and also she knows the very room where long ago she cast aside the spurious gem of Christian Science.

Mrs. Eddy was a re-discoverer in the

domain of speculative thought. Unacquainted with the past of Philosophy, she in the twentieth century reverted to opinions held four hundred years before the Christian Era. This being so, she was poorly equipped for one supposedly in the van of human progress; she was little fitted to be the chosen usherer in of the new age to which Mrs. Stetson and her public are looking. These enthusiasts must, we fear, await the bringer of a larger, saner revelation than is found in the pages of *Science and Health*, or any other message of the new Mary.

The future historian of the rise and fall of fads and cults will find interesting material in the annals of the Eddy movement; and the people of that day, among whom may be many under the spell of some new delusion, will point to the costly and enduring temples originally dedicated to Christian Science worship, and much they will marvel at the belief in the allness of "Good," and the nothingness of evil;

a belief then extinct as shall be that of Mother Ann Lee who, like Mother Eddy, taught that from her revealings would result the cessation of human generation upon the earth.

What then, in all fairness, can be said for Christian Science? Surely this, that amidst our modern material environments, material interests, and material philosophies, it cries aloud, "Prepare ye the ways of Idealism." And of Idealism Emerson said, "We learn first to play with it academically, as the magnet was once a toy. Then we see in the heyday of youth and poetry that it may be true, that it is true in gleams and fragments. Then its countenance waxes stern and grand, and we see that it must be true."

Idealism, to those who understand it, is one that, unlike the God or Good of Christian Science, knows the actuality of evil. Stripped of the sentimentality wherewith Mrs. Eddy has invested it, Idealism may seem too stern to such as realize not that in

their finality Love and Justice are one, that otherwise either would annihilate the other.

In these days of crumbling foundations and tottering edifices of outworn dogma, the pseudo Idealism of Mrs. Eddy, Mrs. Stetson, and the rest of the following, is a provisional structure which, if judiciously remodelled, would bear some semblance to the etherial and high-towering temple of Truth yet reared by mankind amidst these poor, earthly clods of matter.

THE LAW OF LOVE AND SACRIFICE

Although our brief examination of Christian Science proves it a shell almost empty; one cast aside long centuries ago, we should not therefore pronounce all early philosophy so lacking in vital nourishment. Before Xenophanes, before Pythagoras, before the beginnings of Greek metaphysical thought, the thinkers of India were formulating a system known as the Vedanta Philosophy which Professor Max Müller called "the most sublime of all philosophies."

Surely a generous estimate! Still the estimate of one who should know. To support the eminent scholar's opinion, and to contrast the profundity of Vedanta with the shallowness of Christian Science, let us choose for examination a single teaching, one of many, for Vedanta is a three-fold system embracing in its perview a unified trinity of philosophy, religion, and science.

THE LAW OF LOVE AND SACRIFICE

AS love is the highest, mightiest good, so can it be the basest, most destructive evil. In the total of goods and evils, selfless love and selfish love are the positive and negative poles. The one is comprehensive and creative, the other by itself is restrictive and barren, yet in an evolving universe they are indispensable opposites.

This duality of love inheres in the constitution of things; a force making for life, and a force making for death, it exists potentially in every atom, and is the source of balm and poison in every kingdom of nature. The law of love originated in the First Cause, and, as far as human mind can fathom, that law is for all, from the First Cause down to the humblest life where dwells the immanent God.

Because of its origin and universality, the law of love is the law of laws,

the one law of which all others are derivitives. Formulated by Divine Wisdom, the law of selfless love is that of sacrifice; sacrifice which in giving receives. But for the law of selfless love, the Creative Word had not stirred the darkness of the Unmanifested, and man, the lesser word, had never been born.

In the scheme of creation unfolded in the sacred books of ancient India, the alternating objectivity and subjectivity of the universe, in other words its days and nights, are due to the operation of the law of love and sacrifice.

At the beginning of the cosmic night, the All-Father in selfless love had called His children to Himself. From every sphere had they come as, one by one, the fires of suns and systems were quenched by the age-long in-breathing of the "Great Breath," in other words, by the gradual withdrawing of the vital essence of physical flame, and physical life. And now the negative pole of love, to wit, Nature and her progeny,

had come nigh its high Opposite. Actual oneness was about to be, and the All-Father's Love would, in that oneness, become self-love, that against which his Wisdom had decreed.

Then began the primeval sacrifice, the sacrifice of the Logos; the renunciation and separation, the out-breathing of the Great Breath, its vital flame informing the physical atoms, and again bringing into manifestation the material universe. So were the worlds born of love and sacrifice; so at that birth began the operation of the wise and good law whereby the Highest is perfecting, through man and collective nature, the negative pole of his Being.

In this procedure the authors of Vedanta found the secret of wisest, sanest living. Loving sacrifice is the one means of growth ordained by Divine Wisdom, hence the altars of primitive peoples have flamed with offerings acceptable until the nations had come into the essential meaning of sacrifice. It was selfless love that

gathered and condensed the nebule, fixed the planets in their rounds, set the earth in axial motion that everywhere life might feel the sun, and made that sun to shine alike on the just and the unjust. Selfless love is the urge of man's progress and expansion, and, necessarily, his selfish love is the cause of dwarfing and dying.

Love of self in God and man cannot and should not be annihilated because pure love is all-inclusive; moreover, a certain self-love, as check to the unlimited giving of selfless love, is essential to the preservation of being, body, and individuality on any plane of existence. That individuality is not destroyed, but enormously enlarged by man's union with the Universal Self, is the belief of the keenest interpreters of Vedanta. Since the duality of love must exist in God, the problem of man and collective nature is to find the nice equipoise enabling love of self to be an attribute of Perfect Being.

Ages on ages must be devoted to the

mystery, and, after all, the perfect balance is known only to Divine Wisdom, and exists in Deity alone. Jesus in the garden was confronted with a false balance of selfish and selfless love, but, putting down the moment that threatened his mission, he endured to the end. Prince Gautama, heir to a kingdom, must renounce the syren luxury of a palace, and ought else pandering to self-love, and wander forth in long and diligent heart-search for such equilibrium as he at last attained under the sacred tree.

In the subjective semi-cycle symbolized as the indrawing of the Great Breath, and indicated by the death of worlds and the extinction of suns, the negative pole of Universal Being approaches the Positive Pole because in this arc of progress the fruits of perfect love and sacrifice, fruits that differ with every universe, must enrich the Positive Pole, whereas all else of lesser worth must, in that Divine Presence, be assimilated by the

entities producing it. From all this it appears that the universe is as necessary to God as He to the universe.

Evidently the law of giving and receiving is a just and unescapable one rewarding the selfless and the selfish according to their deserts. It is a law making luminous the words, "Cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days." Moreover, this law requires that the bread again be given, but it provides that every return is in larger measure until at last there comes to the giver the world itself which then he gives freely as once he gave the cup of cold water. Meanwhile his ever-expanding ability to help others is conserved by a necessary portion of self-love.

Unescapable as is the law of giving and receiving, it becomes, for Compassion's sake, somewhat flexible in operation. The ordinary man is but clay in the scales of its justice. Grown to be like silver or gold, he is more exactly weighed; afterward, like the

diamond he must submit to the most delicate balance that, finding himself lacking, he may strive toward a more perfect selflessness.

On the other hand, he who acquires for self, holds not his getting for the law of efflux in its own time tears from him, or his, the close-hugged gains of selfishness. "Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away," and in this instance the flying away leaves not blessing, but a sense of absolute loss since man can truly call his own only what accrues to him as reward of worthy personal effort; all else in departing leaves no assurance of its return.

The equilibrium of selfless love and love of self never was in primal Adam, nor could it be in any angel or archangel created as such, for that equilibrium is attainable only through the free exercise of a lesser than Divine Will, in fact a will which, according to Vedanta, is the negative pole of Divine Will. For the balancing of this pair

of opposites, as for the balancing of the opposites of love, the experiences of our material world are indispensable. The struggle in Gethsemane ended in the balancing of will wherefore Jesus said, "thy will be done."

Vedanta teaches that a love-balanced life, a life in complete accord with the law of selfless love, would make of man a sympathetic and potent co-worker with Nature's law-directed forces; such a one would be in tune with, and therefore possess and use wisely, the Master's mystic and magic word analogous to the equilibrating Word of the Divine Architect of the Universe, and symbolized in Masonry by the lost word of Hiram Abiff architect of the Temple.

Of such a master it could be said that not only does he heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out devils; but that even the winds and the sea obey him.

On the other hand, if selfish love prompt man's thoughts and deeds, then, by a change by polarity, self-love

becoming his tyrant, his artful devil, leads him on to where, stripped of real power, he is crushed to bestial or demonic regions which, though not eternally dark and forsaken of progress, are untouched by the wave of this world's evolution.

The attainment of pure love is so necessary to man that, of his grandest material achievements, should be said that they benefit only as far as contributing to the equilibrium of selfless love, and love of self. The law of love has inspired the strivings of saints, and the teachings of sages, throughout the centuries; shining forth from every golden rule and precept, it is, as Jesus said, the law and the prophets.

Vedanta teaches that mind develops because of love which, as desire, was the source of primal, universal motion, and, in its selfless or selfish aspect, is ever the urge of all activity in God, man, and nature. Mind, like love and will, is dual. Divine Mind, and what Christian Science ignores as "mortal

mind," are necessary opposites, the Positive and negative poles of Universal Mind.

According to Vedanta, true wisdom, desire of the wise, is unattainable by one whose love is centred in self, for that wisdom comes only through enlargement of sympathy, in other words, through harmonious vibration with the object of knowledge. Seizing this thought, Richard Wagner in his sacred music drama makes of Parsifal, the simple youth, a wise deliverer enlightened through pity.

Not as the man of mercantile affairs is he wise, nor yet like the statesman, or the general, or the widely-governing king. His is a wisdom undervalued by these, but nevertheless the priceless wisdom of God, indispensable when love and sacrifice shall have become the law of human life.

We have sounded a few characteristic chords in the symphony of Vedanta; a symphony where instruments of treble range are effectively offset by those of

graver tone; a symphony essentially major, but with many a contrasting minor woven through its vast and complex structure; a symphony of balanced parts, of broad and full and flowing harmony contrasting with the unrelieved top-heaviness of Christian Science.

THE PURPOSE OF THE HIGHER DRAMA

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ACTION and speech are man's primal expression of the mind within him. Action he shares with the humblest life, but speech well proves him first of all creatures. Action is fundamental and universal in nature, for the world revolves, and the very rocks are worn and shifted by the elements, and the mountains are lifted up or else bowed down in those mighty convulsions which, through æons, have shaken and rent the globe.

Art is the expression of both nature and man, hence in all art action must needs be. The poem deficient in movement is convicted of fatal dullness. The picture or the statue seeming not to breathe and move, is a wooden failure, a falsification of life. Through gesture, facial expression, and inflection of voice, in short through action, the orator moves and convinces, whereas the mere speaker leaves us cold and unconverted.

THE PURPOSE OF

The drama is an assembly of orators, or, what is equivalent, an assembly of actors who, accentuating vocal and bodily eloquence by means of costume and scenic effect, make for an art the most stirring and convincing of any; an art which, because capable of portraying the vast whole of human life, is immeasurably potent to entertain and instruct, or else to debase the hearer and the actor as well.

Necessarily the drama is of remote origin as every coming together, for war or the festivities of peace, was in some sort a drama with the comic, or the tragic, at least discernible. It is evident that a thing so comprehensive and sensitive as is the drama, must reflect the dominating thoughts and tendencies of any age and nation producing it, and, while Plato, influenced by the Homeric poems, would have made the tragic drama an imitation of the hero who, like Ulysses, both achieves and suffers, still the dominating idea of the ancient world was

largely religious. Always, in grove or temple, the ceremonial of worship was effectively dramatic, while in Athens the drama itself became, on occasions, a religious performance. The essentially religious Eleusinian Mysteries, telling the travail of Persephone, the human soul, that—because of the fruits of her past—was drawn periodically into rebirth, were set forth symbolically by Æschylus the great tragic poet of Attica, and, afterward, in the early centuries of our era, began the custom of enacting in the sanctuary, on festival days, such vital themes of the Church as the nativity and resurrection of Christ. These themes, together with the Bible miracles, and also the Passion and the Cross, were subjects of dramatic endeavor throughout the Middle Ages. The Passion and the Cross are to-day enacted in that abode of lingering mediævalism the Bavarian town of Oberammergau, while the dramatic yet survives in the Greek, the Roman Catholic, and the Anglican communion.

Lofty and reverent in the time of Pericles, ribald in the time of Julius Cæsar, licentious in that of the English restoration, and extravagant and sentimental in the early days of Schiller, the drama, as already said, reflects the ruling thought and tendency of the age, and let it be added that, in each representation, the aroused listener stimulates the performer so that by this action and reaction the power of the play, as an instrument of good or evil or mere entertainment, is vastly enhanced.

What then is the legitimate end of the drama? Evidently to elevate and also to entertain, for, without relaxation, even the most determined grow weary and fail. In the drama let the hideousness of evil be in no way glossed over; never excused and made light of, for, however much evil may seemingly prosper, Justice sits enthroned, and her perpetual adjustments and readjustments have saved the world from itself, have lifted it upward throughout the ages, and still shall lift it up.

THE HIGHER DRAMA

In the stage of to-day are the possibilities of a message vital as that of the prophets and the priests of old; a message not to any chosen people, narrowed to a province, but to world-wide universal man. While frivolity and greed and uncharitableness are now apparent, and in fact everywhere uppermost, yet, beneath these, and ever struggling surfaceward, is the dominant tendency of a new era wherein shall be realized a broader, saner, sweeter brotherhood than Earth had aforetime known. In the stimulation of this tendency the stage of to-day will find its noblest work, for what is nobler than the bringing about of conditions which alone solve the problems of a century setting such mutual interests as capital and labor in unbrotherly opposition? A century fostering those refinements of barbaric cruelty, the various warfares of civilization, warfares begotten of original brute selfishness in man; warfares for whose quelling the would-be helper of his

race has long waited, and still must wait.

But the actor, and the actress, the despised and almost ostracised of earlier days! These must indeed rise to the new possibilities awaiting them; possibilities unsurpassed by those of any other profession; possibilities demanding that their own private lives, like that of the preacher, be consistent with every public appeal, for, otherwise, somewhat of the bad messenger, however much he dissemble, mixes with and adulterates his high message.

In the goodly prime of Greece, the actor realized the dignity and possibilities of his calling, and his itinerancies of a later day familiarized the ancient world with those masterly products of dramatic genius, the tragedies and comedies descending to us from that culminating age. But in the prime of Rome, a prime of strength rather than of culture, the actor, unlike his Greek predecessor, was usually a slave by birth, and so it surprises not that dur-

ing the decadence of Rome, actors, as a class, became so dissolute that, in vigorous reaction from an outworn and sensual paganism to an austere asceticism, the Christian Church denied to these her every sacrament. Although the drama was yet to be her auxiliary, and, in the hands of Lope de Vega and his many predecessors, it was destined to enact the lives of the saints and the life of the Master himself, still the church then condemned it *in toto*. On exhibitions good and bad she looked askance; all were alike an offense to one that had seen the Roman amphitheatre red with the blood of her martyrs.

The average modern theatre-goer will not tolerate such buffoonery and licentiousness as marked the play in the days of tottering Rome, when, to survive the rivalry of the Circus and the Amphitheatre, it pandered to the mob; nor will he countenance such stage morals as obtained in the century for which Ariosto and Macchiavelli composed their comedies; neither would he

listen, at least at public performance, to the unexpurgated text of some of the earlier English playwrights.

As for the dramatic profession of to-day, noble men and women, capable of reviving the best histrionic art, are by no means rare in the rank and file of the stage, and many such, until compelled by sheer necessity, have held themselves apart from every pandering to crude, unevolved popular taste.

To reach the savage, the drama should be that of aboriginal war, the drama of wanton murder or bloody revenge, the drama wherein his own tribe, or, better still, his own kin, are the murderers and revengers, in fact the drama of the uneliminated brute beast that rends and devours.

For the semi-civilized, the drama should resound with the shouts of battling men and also with the shrieks of captive women, lawful prize of lust and victory. The merely civilized listener will rejoice in the iron strength of arms, and the proud bearing of the feudal

lord, from his high-builded walls and towers, ruling by might alone the obsequious or grovelling many.

Having outgrown mere blood and tyranny, the average theatre-goer now turns to the melodramatic, while for him the liaison of the risqué play supersedes the forced yielding of old. Some remnant of the savage, and every subsequent evolution, urges him to witness the evolved representation of all that once delighted his ancestors.

In our present state of human progress, few have wholly outgrown man's ancient tendencies, so, to obtain a hearing, the drama must deal with much that eventually will be but historic. While recognizing this, the world's greatest dramatists have scorned those distortions of life which the mirror, held to nature, fails to reflect; also they have scorned a sensationalism making impossible plot and exaggerated incident the ends of their art. For these playwrights, plot and incident were only means to one end, namely,

the unfolding of their sagest philosophy, and the presentation, through humor and pathos, of their keenest, most helpful criticism of life.

Of this order were the memorable ones who largely share in the glory of Pericles' day, and such were they who

> "fill
> The spacious times of great Elizabeth
> With sounds that echo still."

Fortunate it is that early in the Elizabethan reign the invective of a narrow but well-meaning Puritanism failed to overthrow the stage, for, otherwise, we had inherited no English drama worthy of the name, and therefore no Shakespeare we value outside of the sonnets, and the erotic poems, the first heirs of his invention.

In such drama as most faithfully holds the mirror to nature, individualization of character accompanies development of plot. This drama epitomises life, and is therefore educational. The Shakespearian plays are in this cate-

gory, as also the drama of "Faust," of which masterpiece one should know that the first part, that culminating in the tragedy of Margaret, is, as Richard Wagner remarks, inadequate and misleading without the second part.

Wagner's position is made clear by two illustrations from Bible history. The life of David, measured by the episode denounced by the prophet Nathan, is that of an adulterer and murderer. But, before judgment is passed, one must see the life as a whole, that of a mighty individual man strong in good, and strong, too strong, in evil, once having yielded to its seductions. So with Solomon the great king. Did he not once turn to what proved but vanity and vexation of spirit? Notwithstanding which, he towers the wisest in Israel, the one choosing wisdom as of all gifts the most fitting from God to man.

As for Faust, he likewise is cast in no common mould; although a philosopher, he yields to the sensuous until

by sin dragged nigh to the pit; but Hell cannot seize and submerge him, and eventually he rises to a life of renunciation and faithful service to mankind. Therefore the achievement of this faulty man, who conquered his failings, fulfills the requirements of the higher drama.

Many well-intentioned people to-day wholly condemn the stage, but, while their attitude is demonstrably unfair, their mistakes are more of the head than of the heart. These have seen and considered that which the right-minded everywhere lament, to wit, the dark side, the reverse of an otherwise fair picture. Under reformed conditions these would become friends rather than remain enemies of the theatre.

How shall be brought about that desideratum, the betterment of the stage? A question easy in the answering, but difficult almost to discouragement in the realization.

In China the production of an immoral play is an offence for which the

author in liable under the penal code. Yet this is not all, for, after death, he is supposed to suffer until his play is no longer performed; notwithstanding which, the law in the interest of higher drama is practically inoperative in that country. Now what is true of China would obtain everywhere, the chief traits of human nature varying but little the world over.

It is evident that nothing less than radical change in profitable demand will bring stable results. To begin with, let those who crave the better and the best, ask for, and, more important still, lend to them their liberal patronage.

And now a word to those who stand aloof, drawing their garments close around them. Since the beginnings of civilization, the stage has been with mankind, and so it will endure even to the very end, for it expresses, as no other vehicle, the mental, emotional, and physical activities of man; moreover, in its best estate, notably in the

days of classic Greece, and in Elizabethan times, it voiced the spiritual aspirations of the human soul.

Certainly in Egypt and India, and even in China, the drama in earliest historic times, was wholly a vehicle of religious teaching. When, later, it widened to a representation of contemporary life, great and worthy things were still expected of the stage as the following question and answer well show. "What are those qualities which the virtuous, the wise, the venerable, the learned, and the Brahmin require in a drama?" "Profound exposition of the various passions, pleasing interchange of mutual affection, betterment of character, delicate expression of desire, a surprising story, and elegant language." In this answer is condensed everything that any age or people should demand of the drama, while the "betterment of character" is the real end of religious and ethical endeavor.

Among those who shun and denounce

the theatre, are many music lovers, indiscriminate patrons of French and Italian opera; and what are certain of these operas if not mere sensual love intrigues made more insidiously harmful by the cantabile of the singer, and all the witchery of sweet sounds? From the composing of these things the good Mendelssohn wholly turned away, for he had seen possibilities far better in such lofty themes as "St. Paul" and "Elijah."

What now is the oratorio of "Elijah" but a sacred opera shorn of outward, physical action, but vital with the inner action of the drama? And what is any opera but a drama set to music? No one doubts the spiritual uplift in Mendelssohn's masterpiece, or in Wagner's sacred opera "Parsifal:" then why not accord to the wholesome drama the good lesson it would inculcate?

The very problem from which Mendelssohn turned, was afterward faced by one well-fitted to solve it, and Wag-

ner evolved a complex art creation to which he gave the name of "Music-drama." In this German regeneration, Wagner, as far as consistent with the requirements of modern musical and dramatic art, reverted to the classical models of Greece, as did the leaders of the Italian Renaissance. In characterizing those mythological beings, the gods and heroes of the Norse Saga, beings whose movements were largely controlled by foredooming fate, Wagner aspired to the types bequeathed by Æschylus and Sophocles, but, elsewhere, following the lead of Euripides, he moulded the freer and more appealing human with its virtues and defects, its passions and heart interests. In all this we have Wagner's ideal of the higher drama.

Now as for those who stand aloof from the drama, their non-support of the harmless and even the helpful, notably such plays as "The Christian," and "The Servant in the House," counts always for that against which

war should be waged as when Jeremy Collier published his effective pamphlet, "A short view of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage." Therefore let this class join hands with the patrons of the higher drama, making common cause with them so that united effort arrests and turns the tide of contamination at present well-nigh inundating the modern stage. Thus shall the drama become what in times bygone it meant to Attica, and Athens, and all of ancient Greece; to wit, a national educator and preacher, and, withal, an incomparable entertainer and renewer of the overwrought.

Tragedy and comedy, and all the spectacle that moves between such widely-sundered extremes! Always, from the patriarchal times of Job, it has been that in the crowning years of the world's most memorable ages, imaginative genius has given to the drama its highest, noblest themes, while into these, as fitting matrix, the weightiest wisdom and the brightest

wit have poured that so the higher drama might worthily endure, abiding with men forever.

The past and present scarcity of meritorious plays is no surprising matter. Inevitably it has been thus, and so always will it continue because playwrights of the better sort are themselves rare indeed, much rarer than poets and novelists of equal rank. The ambitious dramatic endeavors of Tennyson himself, have added little to his prestige, while the best labors of Browning and Swinburne have resulted in what is known as closet drama.

For the achieving of anything so objective as the stageable and actable drama, the modern poet is usually too subjective, for, as Byron unwittingly proved, his own personality, coloring all that it contacts, is the center around which his peopled world revolves. The novelist makes fairly useful to himself the glasses fitted to eyes other than his own, but the whole of stagecraft, no inconsiderable art, he must add to his

literary equipment would he venture into the sacred realms of Thespius.

The tricks of the stage, and the resources of the scene-shifter, in other words, the sensational and the spectacular, are the chief reliance of the popular playwright, first, because to master these requires of him only cleverness and practical experience, and, second, because the public responds to cleverness more easily and understandingly than to genius.

Since the popular playwright is incapable of producing worthy and finished lines, he argues speciously that shaping and polishing is labor lost on the average audience, experience proving that always it sets the crude ore above the refined and fashioned gold.

In Shakespeare's day, popular education was undreamed of, and culture was confined to a narrow circle. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the busy actor and author and, withal, the thrifty shareholder in the historic Globe Theatre, held his hearers without de-

scending to the lures of to-day. While necessarily he yielded somewhat to the demands of the pit, still his real mission, as author, was to deliver to succeeding generations of ever-widening enlightenment and culture, a message at once lofty and of universal use; a message unsurpassed by any other outside the pages of Holy Writ.

The Shakespearian drama is not now a profitable money venture, and, notwithstanding the labors of Garrick, it has to no extent been so since the days of the Globe Theatre. In Elizabethan times, the great multitude favored the playhouse and its exhibitions, for the ceremonies of both Church and State had prepared them for these. During and before the reign of James the First, the Puritans, in vigorous reaction, were turning more and more from the rites of established worship, and the show of state occasions, to a simplicity both austere and bare. The pomps and pageantries indicated if not realized on the stage of that time, sug-

gested to the Dissenters the hollowness they hated in cathedral and court alike.

Since those embittered days, an influential minority has steadily antagonized the stage; for to this minority it was identified with pleasure, and pleasure with mere worldliness, and that mere worldliness and the soul's gain could together be dispensed across the footlights was of course absurd.

That larger brotherhood which, as already said, lies beneath the surface of our modern discontent, is already manifesting in what may be called the key-note of to-day, universal toleration; and of this long needed blessing, the stage must necessarily receive its due. As result, that which the promoters and patrons of really elevating drama have well-nigh dispaired of, will yet be wholly accomplished.

Social, political and ethical conditions and problems, inseparable from our changed and changing modern days, are prolific sources of drama, much of which, while not of the highest literary

merit, is wholesome and worthy of encouraging support.

We have that new invention the psychological drama, counterpart of the psychological novel which, almost devoid of plot and incident, is the work of the analyzing essayist who mistakes his calling. Such drama will not here be estimated for it little concerns the great public, and, necessarily, its patrons are in the main a critical cult of students and thinkers.

Addressing those with whom is the balance of power, those who, consciously or unconsciously, control the situation, let us ask their careful and enlightened consideration of this question. Shall we who, realizing the faults and follies of the stage, have altogether shunned it, now lend hand and voice to the purging of that which, from the nature and needs of mankind, must flourish always in our very midst ?

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